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Department of State

398 INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO OUT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 USIA-15 CCO-00 OAS-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8971
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS ROME 19866

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, IT

SUBJECT: ITALIAN NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ON TWA HIJACK THREAT

STATE PASS FAA WASHINGTON

BRUSSELS FOR FAA

FOLLOWING IS TRANSLATION OF AN ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN
"PAESE SERA" (ROME COMMUNIST DAILY NEWSPAPER) ON NOV. 30, 1977:

BEGIN QUOTE: ALARM AT FIUMICINO: A PALESTINIAN ATTACK IS EXPECTED.
BY DANILO MAESTOSI. FOR FIVE DAYS THE SECURITY SERVICES OF
FIUMICINO AIRPORT HAVE BEEN ON ALERT. THIS ALARM HAS BEEN
CAUSED BY INFORMATION TRAVELED BY THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
TO THE COMMANDS OF ALL DEPARTMENTS ENTRUSTED WITH
AIRPORT SURVEILLANCE. THE PHONOGRAM (FORMAL MESSAGE RELAYED
BY TELEPHONE) ANNOUNCED THAT GUERRILLAS OF EXTREMIST FACTIONS
OF THE PALESTINE RESISTANCE SHALL MAKE TWO SIMULTANEOUS DYNAMITE
ATTACKS ON TWO TWA AIRPLANES. REGARDING THE FIRST ATTACK, THE
DOCUMENT ONLY SAYS IT COULD OCCUR IN INDIA. REGARDING THE
SECOND ATTACK, IT IS EXPECTED AT FIUMICINO AIRPORT AND THE
INTELLIGENCE SERVICE HAS VERY DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT IT.

THE TERRORISTS' TARGET IS THE TWA PLANE WHICH STOPS IN TEL
AVIV, ROME, AND PPARIS. ACCORDING TO THEIR PLANS, THE NOTE
SAYS THE JET WILL EXPLODE IN FLIGHT IMMEDIATELY AFTER TAKING
OFF FROM ROME. THE BOMB FOR THIS AIRCRAFT WILL BE CARRIED
(ON BOARD) IN A HANDBAG BY A WOMAN WHO WILL BE UNAWARE OF ITS
PRESENCE OR, AT LEAST, WILL BE CONVINCED THAT THE BOMB WILL
EXPLODE ONLY AFTER THE PLANE LANDS IN PARIS.

ACCORDING TO THE PLANS ALMOST COMPLETELY RECONSTRUCTED BY
THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, THE WOMAN IS BEAUTIFUL, ELEGANT,
ABOUT 1.65 METERS TALL, HAS DARK HAIR AND WILL RECEIVE THE
BAG WITH PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES IN IT DIRECTLY AT FIUMICINO.

THE ANTI-TERRORISM SQUAD APPARENTLY HAS LEARNED IN ADVANCE
THAT THREE OR FOUR PERSONS WILL ASSIST IN THE OPERATION. THE
SQUAD ALSO KNOWS THE FALSE IDENTITIES UNDER WHICH THESE PERSONS
INTEND TO DISGUISE THEMSELVES. ACCORDING TO THE NOTE, THE
ATTACK IS EXPECTED WITHIN A COUPLE OF WEEKS. THE NOTE CONTAINS
ALSO A LIST OF ARAB NAMES WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO THE MEN
WHO CONTROL CUSTOMS AND PASSPORTS. THE ALARM RESULTED IN
A SERIES OF OPERATIONS ABOUT WHICH NOTHING IS KNOWN FOR THE TIME
BEING. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE SOURCES, THE U.S. SECRET SERVICES
HAVE SENT TO FIUMICINO A SMALL SQUAD OF SPECIAL AGENTS.

IN ANY CASE, FOR FOUR DAYS TWA PASSENGERS' BAGGAGE BEING
LOADED ON THE AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN SENT TO A SPECIAL CONTROL
COUNTER IN THE ARRIVALS AREA, WHERE IT IS OPENED AND CAREFULLY
SEARCHED.

AT PRESENT ABOUT 200 PERSONS ARE CHARGED WITH SPECIAL

SURVEILLANCE TASKS FOR THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM. THEY ARE
DIVIDED INTO VARIOUS SHIFTS. MOST OF THEM ARE POLICE AGENTS
AND CARABINIERI. IN ADDITION, THE FINANCE GUARD CORPS HAS
SOME 20 MEN AT FIUMICINO. THIS, HOWEVER, IS A DEFENSIVE
UNIT THAT IS ANYTHING BUT INFALLIBLE AND COMPACT, CERTAINLY
QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THE SYSTEM OF 1974, CREATED OUT OF NOTHING
BY UGO MACERA, DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE, A COUPLE OF MONTHS AFTER
THE ATTACK MADE IN DECEMBER 1973 BY A COMMAND OF PALESTINIAN
GUERRILLAS. HOWEVER, THE UNITS HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO LESS THAN
HALF. THE 1973 ATTACK RESULTED IN THE DESTRUCTION OF A
PAN AM JET, THE KILLING OF 35 PERSONS, AND THE ESCAPE ON A
LUFTHANSA BOEING (BY THE TERRORISTS) WITH SIX HOSTAGES.
ONLY THE MOST PROMINENT SIGNS OF MACERA'S EFFORTS AND
INNOVATIONS REMAIN: MEN WEARING CAMOUFLAGE SUITS IN THE
TRANSIT AREA AND NEAR THE METAL DETECTORS, A UNIT OF MARKSMEN
READY TO TAKE UP POSITIONS WHEN NECESSARY ON THE RUNWAYS OR
ON CORNICES AND TERRACES OF THE AIRPORT, AND POLICE DOGS
CONVERTED INTO DRUG DETECTOR DOGS. THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED
WAS IN OCTOBER 1977 DURING THE SHORT STOP IN ROME OF THE HIJACKED
LUFTHANSA BOEING.

THIS REDUCTION IS MOSTLY THE RESULT OF AN AGREEMENT MADE,
THROUGH UNORTHODOX CHANNELS, BY THE ITALIAN INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE RIGHT AFTER THE FIUMICINO MASSACRE WITH THE TERRORIST
UNITS AND GROUPS OF THE PALESTINE RESISTANCE. THIS AGREEMENT,
TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY EVERYONE, HAS OBVIOUSLY NEVER BEEN CONFIRMED
OFFICIALLY. IT IS A KIND OF NON-AGGRESSION PACT ON THE BASIS
OF WHICH THE FEDAYEEN HAVE UNDERTAKEN NOT TO ACT ANY MORE
WITHIN OUR TERRITORY AND THE ITALIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE AGREED
NOT TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST MEN BELONGING TO THOSE ORGANIZATIONS
WHO HAD BEEN CAUGHT BY OUR POLICE. THE RUMORS CONCERNING
THIS MAY BE TRUE OR FALSE. IN ANY CASE, AS OF THIS MOMENT,
OUR COUNTRY HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN TRULY EXCLUDED FROM THE CIRCUIT
OF ARAB TERRORISM. AND THIS EXPLAINS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS NEW ALLEGED ATTACK.
END QUOTE. GARDNER

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY Quin Ten DATE 5-9-83

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